

# Expressions

Bishan Park  
Secondary School





## FOREWORD BY THE PRINCIPAL

The bougainvillea plants that lined the school porch shimmer brilliantly under the morning sun, while the breeze gently rustles the leaves of the row of mango trees right outside the school gate. I walked inadvertently towards the school canteen to check on the two mangoes hanging on the tree which I had seen a few days ago, only to realise that they were gone. A tinge of melancholy sets in, perhaps of the loss, yet I was reminded of the excitement the sight of the mangoes had given me. Life is always beautiful because of the changes and opportunities bestowed upon us, crafting our emotions into bitter-sweet memories, giving it its distinctiveness.

“Expressions” is a treasured chronicle of the many precious moments of school experiences that took the students through the academic year. As Denzel mentions in his essay, what makes an “experience a memorable one...[are] all the little moments”. It is these memories that will collectively define our character and give us our heritage.

In the essays presented in this collection, many like Ernestina, Boon Chye and Celestine expressed their gratitude and respect for the teachers who have supported them with dedication beyond their core duty. Ernestina’s musings, “You’ll never know how much you’ve moulded me/ And the greatest impression you’ve left on me”, allowed me to realise that BPSians have grown into mature young adults who give due appreciation and respect.

I am also moved by Damien and Nicole, who both reflected on how Oeuvre had created a magical bonding experience for them and their friends. Their direct involvement in Oeuvre must have been the most wondrous part of their school lives. As Nicole said, the musicals “truly encapsulated our strong and tight-knit BPSian spirit”. There are many more interesting essays within this collection for all of us to enjoy. Be it an overseas learning journey or a performance at the National Gallery, these have been indelible life experiences for them.

Experience is not just translated through the written word, but it is also captured in art. The various art pieces included embody the everyday yet prominent features of the school, such as the “Central Staircase” by Tiffany and “The staircase from the Canteen to the school Hall” by Eddie. The significance of these supposedly mundane elements is not lost in the routines but connects deeply with Tiffany and Eddie. I am sure for Eddie, he will be reminded many years down the road of the times students sprinted up the staircase in time for the bell for morning assembly. Clearly in our hearts, we know that school is a place which not only imparts knowledge but also imbues in us the self-discipline required for a good life ahead.

After reading how the varied experiences of BPSS students have impacted them, I am comforted to know that my students have enjoyed school. I only wish that these experiences have nurtured the qualities of equanimity and resilience for my students to live life to the fullest.

Last but not least, this publication would not have been possible without the dedicated work of the Editorial Team, led by Ms Diana Chua, Head of Department for English Language.

Let us now turn the page, and perhaps what is within will stir up a whole host of memories and emotions in you.

Mdm Valerie Goh  
Principal  
Bishan Park Secondary School

## WORDS FROM MISS BHAVANA

### Buds to Blossoms

You prune your flowers in the garden in hopes of using them some day

You want them to become exquisite in every special way

As tiny seeds they begin, pregnant with potential

So with water, sunlight and love you give like rain that's torrential

Soon you notice the efflorescence

And watch as bud turns to beauty quintessence

With a keen eye and a demeanour so solemn

You pick them as soon as they have blossomed

The work doesn't end there for there's always presentation

Should roses be coupled with stalks of carnation?

First to de-thorn and then to snip,

Then to add fillers to accentuate with a sprig

A vase or a bouquet, what should suit the soiree?

To use ribbon or lace, which would exude grace?

So simple a task it may seem especially if one is to keep with a theme

Yet there's so much to ruminate and ponder

Before coming up with something that begets awe and wonder

I have come to realise that whenever hard work is coupled with *heart work*, the end result is always something fulfilling. This has been my journey with this collection. Putting together a book such as this is not unlike the work of a gardener who grows flowers and eventually picks them to put together a beauteous bouquet. What the editorial team and I have found to be especially gratifying throughout this process is the overwhelming response from students who shared their literary or artistic contemplations in this publication. It is without doubt that their outpouring comes straight from the heart.

While the year has been a bittersweet one with the news of the school's merger with Peirce Secondary School, BPSS students have shown resilience and optimism in their choice to celebrate the memories of their school experiences which they hold so dear. In my poem, I talk of the students' essays as beautiful blooms. And while I concur that flowers do not last forever, the happy memories they create in the receiver are perennial.

So some years down the row, when you happen to flip through the pages of this book, may the petals of nostalgia caress you with the fragrance of fond memories so precious of Bishan Park Secondary School...

Miss Bhavana Thiagarajan  
Literature Teacher  
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# Remembrance

The paper may crumble,  
The ink may fade,  
But never the memories I've made

Memories serve to remind us  
Of things that have gone before  
Of special friends and loves ones  
And some we'll never see anymore

Nevertheless, I know deep in my heart  
That I will never forget,  
Neither will I regret  
The experiences I've had both good and bad

Dearest Bishan Park Secondary School  
You'll never know how much you've moulded me  
And the greatest impression you've left on me  
You gave me some good times,  
My best years  
My good friends  
My caring teachers  
Memories for a lifetime

-Yumang Ernestina Gonzales 2E2



# Our Pride

Basil Lim 5A1

I believe that every student has his or her own individual reasons to be proud of his or her school. To me, this sense of pride stems from personal satisfaction and joy with regard to the school's achievements, and what it does, which one feels is representative of him or herself as a student of the school.

One of the things that makes me proud to be a student of Bishan Park Secondary are the values that were inculcated in me through the years here, which include integrity, perseverance, and responsibility. These values helped me become more mature as a teenager, and allowed me to be able to see things from a different perspective. For example, learning the importance of perseverance helped me realise that only through hard work can we achieve success. I am therefore proud to be a student of BPS as through the learning of such values, I have become a better person.

The teachers of this school are the second reason why I am proud to be a student of BPS. The effort which my teachers put in to prepare for their lessons never ceases to amaze me. Their lessons always have the ability to captivate my attention and make me interested to learn. On top of that, my teachers tirelessly encourage me not to give up, especially when I have not done well for a piece of work, and tell me that setbacks are merely part and parcel of life – advice which I take to heart. The teachers of BPS never fail to lead and guide their students both academically, or through character-building, and this is yet another reason why I am proud to be a student of BPS.

I am proud of BPS too because through the opportunities provided by the school, I discovered my love and talent for baking – something which I would never have realised on my own. These opportunities have allowed me to see the potential that I have, and what I am capable of doing, even in non-academic areas.

Bishan Park Secondary has truly moulded and shaped me into who I am today, and I will always be proud to call myself a BPSian!

# Our Pride

Nur Qistina 1E1

Although I am only in Secondary One and thus have only been in Bishan Park Secondary School for a year, I am glad to be a part of it, and am proud to call BPS my school. This sentiment would not be possible without several factors, such as the kind and caring teachers which this school has, the school's HARTs programme, as well as the conducive learning environment we have here.

Firstly, the teachers in BPS are very dedicated to their jobs. Some teachers even sacrifice their free time after school or in the weekends to help clear our doubts about our studies. Having such teachers truly encourage us to do well and strive for excellence. For example, my Maths teacher organises remedial classes for us to attend after school twice a week, so that we may consult him with questions that we have regarding Maths topics. In doing so, I know that he is giving up his free time in order to ensure that we learn better, and I am appreciative of the effort teachers like him put in for our well-being. Having such teachers makes me feel really proud of and privileged to be a BPSian.

The conducive learning environment which we have here is another thing which makes me proud to be a student of this school. The facilities and equipment which we have are clean, and are made easily accessible for the students to use. For some of us, school often feels like a second home, and it makes me feel proud knowing that we have amenities such as the Jam Hub and the Indoor Sports Hall to carry out non-academic activities.

With all this said, I know that I will always carry the BPSian spirit with me, and feel privileged to have been a part of this school.



# My Guardian Angels

Seng Boon Chye 1E1

After having been in Bishan Park Secondary for a year, I can most certainly say that I am truly proud to be a student of this school. A large part of this is due to the many kind and caring school staff whom I have had the chance to cross paths with. When I compare the BPS staff members to those in my primary school, from the teachers to the support staff, and even the canteen vendors, I must say that I feel the staff here treat students more generously and kindly. In reflection of this aspect, some incidents stand out in particular.

The first of these incidents actually happened on the first day of school for me. I was already feeling nervous and jittery before I even stepped foot into the school compound, realising that I would not know anyone I meet. When I finally reached BPS, I was immediately overwhelmed by the foreignness of the place, and did not know where to report for assembly. This was when one of the teachers spotted me and walked over to me. Her warm smile, along with her calm demeanour, somehow made me feel less nervous. She guided me to the school hall and once there, even encouraged her students to interact with and befriend me. I was extremely grateful and thankful to her, and from that moment on, I knew that I would enjoy studying in BPS.

This was just one of the many pleasant encounters that I have had with teachers in BPS. I also recall another time, during a Maths lesson, when I felt extremely annoyed and frustrated with myself as I had been stuck at a question for a long time. Although the size of my class is relatively large, my teacher is nonetheless very observant of each and every one of us, and when she saw the confused look on my face, she knew straightaway that I was troubled by my work. She did not have the time to address it in class, but she made sure to request that I stayed back after school to meet her so that she could address my queries. When she met me after school to do so, she listened to me patiently and made sure she helped clear all of my doubts about the Maths topic. Due to the care and concern which she showed all of us, more and more of my classmates, especially those who are shyer, started to open up to her as they knew that she is very understanding towards others.

Apart from the teachers, the canteen vendors in BPS also show care and kindness to students. There was once, during recess, my friend and I had queued up to buy chicken rice. However, upon receiving his plate of rice, my friend accidentally dropped it on the floor. Not only did the canteen vendor give him a new, free-of-charge plate of chicken rice, but she also helped us clean up the mess. This really surprised me as it was my friend's fault for being careless, and she did not have to help us, but she still continued to do so out of kindness.

As people always say, values are inculcated through one's environment, and I truly think that here in BPS, the staff members lead by example. As a student, I am inspired to promote the same kind of care and concern which they have shown me by doing the same towards my friends and family!

# My Guardian Angels

Ryan Phillips Morgan 4A1

Throughout my education journey in secondary school, I have encountered lots of memorable, indelible moments that I am sure to remember even as I grow up. However, one not so specific yet heart-warming bunch of memories stems from the kind and caring staff in Bishan Park Secondary School. The staff includes teachers and also non-teaching and administrative staff such as the office staff and technicians.

Nelson Mandela once said, “Education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world.” The teacher imparts education hence the role of the teacher is of paramount importance both in the present and the future of a student. I have very good teachers throughout my secondary school life here. They are devoted teachers and the worshipers of good values. They embed in our mind virtues like hard work, honesty and courage. They are always willing to lend a helping hand, and also to help students who are in need of help, and in dedication, also on their off-days and after working hours.

Non-teaching and administrative staff such as the helpdesk and office staff also have a huge role to play in the functioning of the school. They work behind the scenes in the office daily and are usually less acknowledged in educational institutions. Many of the office staff I have encountered are helpful and always uphold the “service with a smile” attitude albeit their stressful workload. In a particular case, I had lost my expensive cellphone and an office staff offered to help me search for it, together with a few other colleagues and they also spent time to console me. These actions weren’t necessary and certainly weren’t required in their job description and are simply acts of kindness. Other instances include daily greetings and acts such as asking “How are you?” I am grateful to have such kind and caring office staff.

The staff in my school are wonderful and uphold lots of values such as kindness and always willing to lend a helping hand. For that, I am grateful and these are memories that I will cherish.

# My Guardian Angels

*Chan Day Yun 4A1*

When I first joined Bishan Park Secondary School, I have never expected our teachers and canteen vendors to be so friendly. Every day, I will be greeted with smiles on their faces. The administrative aunties and uncles will always ask "How's your day?" whenever they see me. After school, when we want to study in the library, our librarian, Madam Anna would always tell us to lower our volume so that everyone would have a conducive environment to study in. I feel that this is a very thoughtful thing to do as she cares for the students' well-being.

Not just our librarian, our canteen vendors have also been very kind towards us. When we order our food, they will always reply us with their full attention even though they have to serve many students. They would also be very patient with us when we order our meals.

Lastly, our teachers are the ones who have constantly been there for us. Whenever we have doubts, they are there to clarify with us. They never fail to put in their best to ensure that we will do well. The teachers never fail to encourage us to strive for excellence in our studies and they have faith in us. To them, they feel that every student has the potential to do well with hard work. Our teachers have also showed us things we never knew we were good at and they come in every single day and being our caring and patient teachers always regardless of what happens. It is important to appreciate our teachers and staffs because they have been supporting and guiding us from the start thus we have to show gratitude towards them.

# The Parade Of The Year

Tham Xi Huan 4E3

In commemoration of National Day every year, Bishan Park Secondary would organise a celebration a few days before the 9th of August for us students to partake in the expressing of love and gratitude for our country. This year was no different as we celebrated our nation's 51st year of independence.

I have always felt that out of the numerous school events and activities each year, I enjoy celebrating National Day the most. The reason for this is because all Singaporeans can take part in the festivities equally, regardless of race or religion. Being able to see all my fellow Singaporean schoolmates share a common sentiment towards their country on this day also makes me feel extremely proud of our little nation, not to mention of the unity that we display as a school!

This year, our celebrations started off with a marching parade during morning assembly, which was made up of members from the different Uniform Groups, along with the school's Symphonic Band. The moment the Band started playing and the marching commenced, I noticed that everybody immediately stopped fidgeting and stood at attention. It was almost as if there was an unsaid cooperation amongst the entire school populace.

In the later part of the day, we had to move off to the hall for the second half of the celebrations. For the next one hour or so, everybody was singing along to the various National Day songs that were being played. There was an air of nostalgia as we not only sang along to this year's theme song, but the songs from previous years too. As some of our schoolmates carried out their performances on stage, we were all so caught up in the moment that we could not help clapping along to their songs too.

The celebrations eventually ended off with a small, informal procession, led by the school councillors, winding along the school hall as students who wanted to both sing and dance to the National Day songs got up to join their friends in doing so. It was truly a sight to behold!

Although I will be graduating this year, I do hope that National Day celebrations will always remain this way in BPS, as there is no better time for the students to feel as bonded and united as a school. I also hope that I will have more opportunities to partake in such National Day festivities in the future, no matter which institution I will head off to next year!

# A Magical Journey

Denzel Sujanto 4E3

During my four years in Bishan Park Secondary, I have had the opportunity to participate in and witness the school's biennial musicals, 'Oeuvre', both as a cast member and a member of the audience. My first experience was in 2014, when I was in Secondary 2. After the mid-year exam, I was approached by a teacher-in-charge who asked if I was interested in taking up a minor role in the musical, which was an adaptation of 'Wicked'. I gladly agreed to it as I thought it would be a good experience in learning to step out of my comfort zone, and I was right.

For my role, I had to enact the part in the musical where Doctor Dillamond was captured and beaten. Although it was just a short scene, I made sure that I attended every rehearsal there was so that I would be able to do my part well. I did not want to let my teachers and the rest of the cast down as we all knew that a tiny mistake would jeopardise the entire musical's success.

After a few months of practice, it was finally D-Day, so to speak, and the whole cast took a bus to NUS' Cultural Centre early in the morning to have our final rehearsal in the actual theatre. It was an entirely new and refreshing experience for me as I have never been into an actual backstage dressing room before, much less have others help me put on my makeup! Furthermore, the experience backstage is truly one that cannot be bought. I was able to witness, firsthand, my friends magically transformed from the people I knew into the characters they were playing once they stepped out into the spotlight. When my time came, I put on my goat mask and was wired up to a microphone before I stepped on stage. It was truly an exhilarating few minutes, albeit slightly intimidating.

What made my first Oeuvre experience a memorable one, apart from the actual performance itself, was of course all the little moments with the rest of the cast, such as being able to share stories, laughing at each other's jokes, and getting to know everyone a little better.

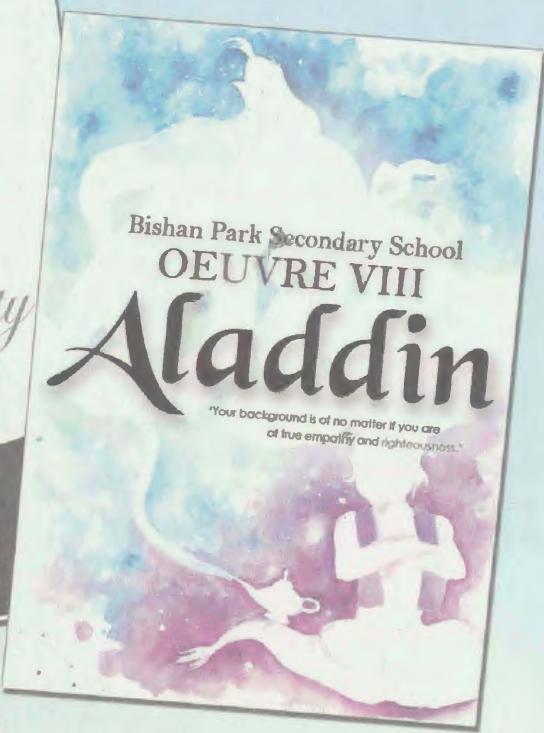
Fast forward another two years, and I found myself attending my second Oeuvre musical, now as an audience member. This year's Oeuvre musical was an adaptation of one of my favourite Disney cartoons, 'Aladdin'. Being part of the audience was truly 'a whole new world' in terms of experience as compared to the one I had as a cast member, especially with the knowledge that this Oeuvre musical would be BPS' last before the merger with Peirce Secondary School.

This year's Oeuvre musical was held at the Victoria Theatre. Attending the musical with friends whom I have studied and grown up with for the past four years made this occasion all the more special for me. Perhaps since this was the last Oeuvre I would ever attend, and one of the last few school events I would attend with my friends before we take our national examination and graduate, I felt that the performance was all the more extraordinary and memorable.

It has truly been an honour and privilege to be able to take part in and experience a school musical, not only once, but twice, and I count myself amongst the fortunate to be able to have these memories of BPS to take away with me when I graduate!



**Defying Gravity 2014 Art Work**  
*Siti Nur Azizah Bte Rasani 3E1*



**Aladdin 2016 Art Work**  
*Sophia Chew Hwee Sim 3E1*

# A Magical Journey

Lim Shu Yu 2E1

Oeuvre VIII - Aladdin was a really great experience for me. It was my first time at a musical and I was excited to watch my friends perform. The musical was indeed an eye opener for me.

My friends and I dressed in our finest, and enthusiastically walked from the MRT train station to the well-known Victoria Concert Hall. When we reached, we were taken in by the lively and bright atmosphere. A couple of student councillors were handing out programme booklets to the students and guests, while some of them were warmly welcoming the guests. Parents and students were busy chattering away in gusto about how the performance would be that night. A couple of my friends were squealing with delight as they were as excited to experience what it would be like to be at the Victoria Theatre. I was indeed taken by the large crowd gathering at the main hall.

It was 7pm when the teachers announced for everyone to enter the theatre. I was excited. As I walked in, I was enraptured by the beauty of the theatre. Everyone settled into their seats and waited patiently for the musical to start. Not long after, the lights dimmed and the chatty atmosphere died down. It started off with the hosts introducing themselves and greeting the audience. Afterwards, the curtains drew and the characters of the play came out. It was surely interesting as I got to see how my school mates played the different characters on stage; goofy Damien acted as the protagonist, Aladdin, and the unassuming Daniel as the antagonist, Jafar. They were confident and projected their voices well. In my opinion, I liked how Eunice played the peddler as she was undeniably convincing and expressive on stage. I cannot imagine being able to do what she did. Not only was she dressed as an old woman at 14, she was also the first character to emerge and open the entire musical. I would have been a bag of nerves!

Not long after, the dancers and the choir came on. They danced gracefully and sang melodiously on stage and were well coordinated. The music from our school band was awesome too; the sound from their drums and trumpets swelled with pride. I was also awed by the effects on stage, like the colourful lights, the misty fog and the visual scenes. Undoubtedly, the cast and crew had put in a great deal of effort to make the musical the success that it was. I felt proud and happy to see my classmates and friends performing on stage.

At the end of the musical, the Principal went up on stage to thank everyone. Afterwards, the BPSians in the audience rose to sing our School Song. The most exhilarating part was when everyone chorused "Towards Greater Heights!" in unison. I was touched and taken aback. I had never heard the whole entire school cohort sing our school song with so much gusto. I immediately felt a sense of pride and belonging to my school.

Overall, Oeuvre was a more than pleasant experience for me. The musical has indeed ignited in me a greater appreciation for the arts. I am glad I was given this beautiful experience.

# A Magical Journey

Nicole Anne Estremos 4E2

'Oeuvre' is Bishan Park Secondary's biennial school musical. Needless to say, it is a very special event for the whole school as it is an occasion where we would all get to watch and enjoy a performance put up by our fellow talented BPSians after many months of hard work and training on their part.

During my four years in BPS, I have had the privilege of experiencing and attending two Oeuvre musicals – once in Secondary 2, when I helped out as a backstage crew member, and another time in Secondary 4, when I attended as part of the audience. While it was rewarding and enriching to be part of the crew for a musical, it was definitely a vastly different experience being part of the audience this time round.

For Oeuvre this year, the school put up a musical version of the well-known and well-loved story of 'Aladdin'. The musical was held at Victoria Hall Theatre, and when I first stepped foot into the place, I felt an immense sense of pride as it was indeed a huge honour to be able to perform at this venue! There was a lot of talk and chatter while we gathered and waited for our friends, and the atmosphere was abuzz with excitement. It was also a pleasing sight to be able to see everybody dress his best for this event.

When we were finally allowed into the main hall, we quickly moved to our assigned seats and settled down. A hush fell over the entire room as we all waited with bated breath for the actors to make their appearance on stage. Finally, the play started! A student dressed as the peddler made her way out, introducing to us the premise of the story through song, and soon after, the rest of the main cast followed. Throughout the musical, we laughed and even felt sad at parts. When it ended, all the cast members were invited out on stage, and the school song was played. We all stood up and sang along with them too, our hearts filled with joy and pride for BPS.

Although the musical ended at this point in time, the night was still not over for us! Most of us lingered in the main hall to take photos with the cast members, who were our friends. This particular moment formed some of my fondest memories of the event, as I am sure it did too for many others who had attended to show support and encouragement for their friends.

The Oeuvre musicals were definitely the best experiences I had while studying in BPS. They truly encapsulated our strong and tight-knit BPSian spirit, demonstrated through the hard work and dedication all the performers and teachers put into making them a success, as well as the school's effort to support the performers. I am glad I am able to graduate from BPS with all these unforgettable memories etched in my mind.

# A Magical Journey

Damien Ng 2E3

This year, I had the honour of being selected to play the title character in the school's Oeuvre musical, 'Aladdin'. When the teachers-in-charge revealed this piece of news to me, I was extremely shocked as I did not expect to be chosen. I personally felt that I was not good at acting, and with no experience whatsoever, the prospect terrified me. However, I managed to muster all the courage that I had, and in agreeing to take up the role, made up my mind to do my very best.

During our first rehearsal, we were all given our scripts and told to do an impromptu run-through of the musical. By the next session, we had to finish memorising the lines from the first few scenes – all these were quite difficult tasks. In addition, I faced some personal obstacles which initially hindered my performance, such as my inability to articulate 'th-' sounds accurately, and my fear of heights. As Aladdin, there were scenes where I had to climb atop a palanquin, which was then carried at shoulder height for a short distance, and not to mention the flying carpet, which in actuality was a moving table. It took me quite a while to master and get over both of these, and I was only able to do so because the teachers and other cast members continuously encouraged and showed their belief in me.

Needless to say, during the practices we had many ups and downs. We managed to have fun, but at the same time needed to know when to be serious as we were often pressed for time, since there was so much that needed to be done. During the rehearsals, apart from getting to know my friends better, I also got to know my teachers better as well.

On the day of the actual performance, we went to Victoria Theatre early in the morning and practised from the moment we reached right till an hour before show time. It was extremely nerve-wracking as we each waited our turn to get our makeup done and our microphones strapped on. As with every event, however, it is always the little moments that count the most, and I recall most fondly the hour or so that the cast could relax and bond with each other as the sound check and stage plotting were carried out.

When the curtains were lifted and the musical finally commenced, we were all naturally afraid of messing up and therefore took turns to wish each other good luck before making our first appearance on stage. Luckily, everything went smoothly and according to plan. The most breathtaking moment I had on stage was when I was atop the palanquin, looking out at the huge audience, knowing finally that I had conquered my fear of heights and stage fright. I was filled with a sense of pride!

Being able to take part in Oeuvre this year was truly a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, and I am proud to say that it is my greatest accomplishment in Bishan Park Secondary School thus far.



# A Magical Journey

*Macus Tun 4A1*

Oeuvre is a biennial musical concert that is held to showcase the artworks and talents of our students. I first heard about Oeuvre from my seniors when I was in secondary one and I was really excited to become part of the production during my study in BPS.

This year as a secondary four student in the school, I had the chance to participate in the second Oeuvre production as a photographer. This year, Oeuvre VIII was based on the adaptation of one of Disney's cartoons, Aladdin, and the moral of this musical is that where you come from does not matter, if you are a person of true empathy.

Initially I didn't really expect much out of this musical and I thought that this musical wasn't going to be as good as the previous Oeuvre musicals as the rehearsals were very messy and there were missing people here and there during the combined rehearsals.

But during the final combined rehearsal and before the actual performance at the Victoria Theatre, I could see that all the participants including the crew were very committed in what they were doing and was in role when they stepped onto the stage even though it was just a rehearsal.

The actual performance was phenomenal. Albeit the musical was short, the musical was way better than what I really expected and the puns during the musical kept me chuckling and awake. After the curtain call, the musical ended with the singing of the school song. It was after so long that I heard the school amalgamated to sing the school song that was resounding and with such gusto. There were people who were so touched by it that they cried while singing.

My Oeuvre experience is one that I would hold dearly to my heart. I'm sure that all the cast and crew enjoyed the journey that we took together and Oeuvre would indubitably be one of the very reasons to remember our secondary school life in Bishan Park Secondary School.

# A Much-Awaited Carnival

Sharandeep Kaur D/O S S 5A1

The PHReNz Carnival has always been a school event that I look forward to every year. It is a day with many fun-filled activities lined up for the entire student body to participate together as a class.

If I am only allowed to pick one activity to participate in, it will definitely be water soccer. Water soccer is a variant of soccer that is played in a huge inflatable court. What makes it both different and exciting from soccer is that the players play in ankle-deep water. The activity is incredibly fun as not only do I get to play the game with my classmates, but also that no one leaves the court dry. At times, we were so focused on splashing water and laughing at one another instead of scoring against our opponents. The water soccer station is definitely what I enjoy most about PHRenZ Carnival.

With so many exciting activities planned for us during PHReNz Carnival each year, it is only natural that I have so many great memories. My most enjoyable memory is witnessing my class' teamwork during the activities. Although the PHReNz Carnival is a non-competitive event, my classmates and I needed teamwork in order to complete the various activities. For instance, my classmates helped those who were preparing to enter and stand in the inflatable bubble to play Zorb Soccer. Without their help, it would have been almost impossible to stand up in the bubble. Throughout the event, we were able to complete the various activities as we cooperated with one another to reach our common goal.

I also enjoy interacting with the students from other classes and competing with them in friendly matches during the PHReNz Carnival. I remember having such a great amount of fun when playing archery with the students from the other classes. We even worked together to strategise in order to complete the archery activity. I also had the chance to make new friends from students of other levels.

As this is my final year in Bishan Park Secondary School, I am grateful for all the fond memories forged with both my classmates and schoolmates throughout all the five PHRenZ Carnivals that I have participated in. These memories will be etched in my mind forever.

# Growing Up

Low Zemin Larissa 4E2

My leadership journey in BPSS has been a long and fulfilling one that has taught me a lot. It all began with me joining the school's student council as a student councilor, before moving on to be part of the student council's executive committee (EXCO) team.

Being in the student council meant that I had many responsibilities to fulfill such as doing my duties diligently and mentoring my juniors with wisdom. When I was appointed as Head of Innovations and Enterprise in the student council, I had even more responsibilities to fulfil. This included leading my team members in discussions for various school events such as Teachers' Day, Valentine's Day, student forums and more.

I recall the time when the other EXCO members and I prepared to run a booth during recess to celebrate Valentine's Day. We spent numerous afternoons huddled in the unofficial student council meeting room to brainstorm ideas and fine-tune our plans. Although it was not a smooth-sailing process, I learned the importance of listening to my team members and being open to ideas contributed by others.

When I first entered BPSS, I was really shy and would have never imagined myself taking on any leadership role. However, I was given the opportunity to lead a group of students from other schools at a youth leaders summit. It was a daunting challenge but on hindsight, I am glad that I stepped out of my comfort zone and rose to the occasion. Not only did I make new friends from other schools, but also the entire process helped to develop my self-confidence and was proof that I had the capability to lead others.

This is just one of the many opportunities that the school has given to me throughout my journey as a leader in BPSS, which I am extremely thankful for. Not only do I graduate from BPSS with wonderful memories that I cherish, but I also leave with the confidence that I can continue to be a leader in my next stage of life.

# Learning away from Home

Vicky Guo Qiaochu 2E1

There were many things I was worried about before I came to Singapore to study, such as how do I get used to the different way of teaching? What if I have difficulties interacting with my classmates? What if I cannot catch up with school work? I was confronted with so many “what ifs”.

Although, I did not seem to face as many problems as I had foreseen when I came to BPSS to start my secondary school life, there were still a few things I needed to learn.

The first lesson I learnt was regarding my grades. As I am an international student from China, English was a foreign language to me. I have to admit that learning everything in a language that did not come naturally to me was a mean task. I had difficulty understanding the words and answering questions in English was even more difficult. Fortunately, I had a bunch of good friends who were willing to help me. We would often go to the library to study together. Because all of them are English speakers, learning to speak and write English was not as difficult as I expected it to be. After some weeks of ‘tuition’ from my friends, I could understand my school work better and finally was getting the grasp of this language I thought I was going to despise.

As I am from China, it was not easy for me to adapt to this new environment. However, luckily for me, Mr Shu Yun Chao helped me greatly. I still remember the excitement I felt when Mr Shu’s accent sounded so familiar to me. Mr Shu is my Mother Tongue Language teacher and just like me, he is also from China. What is different is that he has much more experience in BPSS than I did. Mr Shu taught me many things that were not just about the Chinese language. Whenever I feel like speaking in Chinese, I could always go to him and start the conversation in the language I’m most comfortable with.

I have also learnt about leadership. When I was still in secondary 1, I was lucky to be appointed as a student councillor. There is this sentence printed at the back of our councillor t-shirt which I like very much --- “To Lead is to Serve”. This sentence reveals what we do as student councillors. We organise programmes during the Teachers’ Day, National Day and other celebrations. At first I was nervous about being on stage to perform but with the encouragement from the Student Council EXCO members, teachers, and other student councilors, it was not as scary as I thought it would be. In fact I enjoyed myself thoroughly. It was one of my most precious memories in BPSS.

My learning journey in BPSS has not ended and I look forward to more unforgettable memories I will make here. Thank you BPSS for giving me such a wonderful secondary school experience thus far!

# Learning away from Home

Pek Li-Wen Sydney 4E1

In Secondary Three, I was selected to participate in an overseas trip to Bali, Indonesia. I was really excited and could feel the thrill and euphoria rolling off me in waves through my wide smile and inner cheers. It was my first overseas trip with my school mates! Who would have known that this trip would leave such an indelible mark in my life?

The school had planned for us to head to Bali to learn more about environmental sustainability. Bali is a popular eco destination with stunning beaches and beautiful nature. We visited farms and padi fields to watch and learn more about the Balinese way of life, and think of eco-friendly ideas that could be implemented back in school.

During the trip, we learned how to use uneaten fruits, leaves, branches and cow dung to make fertilizers for plants. We also learned how to make dyes out of fruits, and how to make a new bar of soap from used soaps. I really enjoyed these hands-on experiences as they allowed me to directly observe and interact with the Balinese people. Most of the workers there were women and it was really heartwarming to witness these individuals care for the well-being of both the environment and those around them.

We also visited the luxurious green hills of Bali and climbed the never-ending steep slopes with minimal breaks. The sun baked down on our already sun-burnt faces and sweat dripped profusely down our foreheads. However, all of us encouraged one another to push on and made it to the peak of the hill eventually. At the top, we sat down in a hut and enjoyed coconut juice while admiring the green padi fields. The view was so breathtaking that we forgot how exhausting the climb was.

On the last night of the trip, all of us dined at a seafood restaurant that was located near the beach. As we ate the delicious food, we were treated to a spectacular view of the sunset. After dinner, my friends and I strolled on the beach and took numerous photographs.

Traveling to Bali was a deeply mind-altering experience after meeting a myriad of hardworking and sincere Balinese people who had a strong sense of community and satisfaction to lead a simple and meaningful life. Traveling with my friends also deepened our friendships as we discovered each other's strengths and weaknesses. Till today, I still reminisce about the Bali trip with my friends as it is definitely a trip that I will never forget.

# Learning away from Home

Supetran Gabrielle Salamat 2E3

I was blessed to be chosen as a candidate for an Overseas Educational Visit (OEV) trip to Brunei organized by the National Police Cadet Corps (NPCC). When the teachers told me that I was chosen, I was overwhelmed with immense joy. This was a rare opportunity as only 30 cadets could participate and each participating school could only send a student.

I was amazed when we boarded the airplane operated by Singapore Airlines and in awe of the plane's huge interior and luxurious seats. After a few hours, we touched down in Brunei and were warmly welcomed by the Brunei cadets who lined up in 2 neat rows outside the arrival hall.

Initially, I was worried that I would not be able to click with the other cadets but my worries were put to rest as everyone was really friendly and enthusiastic. It did not take me long to remember everyone's names!

During the trip, I learned more about the culture and practices of Brunei. For instance, I learned that it was rude to point at someone with my index finger and should point with my thumb instead. Before eating, all of us had to wait for the Muslims to say their prayers as a form of respect. Additionally, whenever a prayer was broadcasted over the radio, everyone had to stop talking. It was a real eye-opener to witness these practices.

We went to different police stations and learned more about the country's law through various talks by the local police officers. We had the chance to witness the local police officers prepare for their motorcycle exams and were thoroughly impressed by how well they could control their motorcycles. We also visited the Police Navy to learn more about their job and have a first-hand experience at trying out their swimming gear and riding on the boats.

As the days went by, both the Singapore and Brunei cadets formed really strong bonds and it was clear that all of us really enjoyed interacting with one another. On the last day, everyone found it difficult to bid farewell to one another and did not want to leave.

The OEV trip is definitely a highlight in my journey as a member of NPCC. Not only did I make new friends both from Singapore and Brunei, but I also had the opportunity to understand the work of foreign police establishments and gain an insight into the Bruneians' way of life. I look forward to participating in such trips in the future.

# Learning away from Home

Yang Wanwen 2E3

Before coming to Singapore to study, I was warned that it would not be easy to learn the English language. Nonetheless, I made the decision to move to Singapore and arrived with determination to learn the language in a language school.

Initially, my enthusiasm spurred me on. However, I gradually became discouraged and depressed as it was difficult to understand what the teachers were teaching. I struggled to keep up with the pace of the lessons. It was really embarrassing when I was unable to reply others and depended heavily on the electronic translator to understand many English words. The more I struggled, the more I became homesick.

However, I always reminded myself that it was my decision to move to Singapore to study. Each time I felt like giving up, my family members would also encourage me to press on and keep trying no matter how difficult it was. With all the encouragement from my family, I told myself to try my best.

Every morning, I would wake up early to read books. I would write as many essays as I could to improve my writing skills. After almost a year of hard work, I achieved my goal of passing the international English test that I had to complete in order to enroll into a local secondary school.

My learning journey in Singapore has not been easy but it has been memorable as I recall how I persevered to reach and excel despite the various obstacles in the way.

# Rhapsodies @ National Gallery

*Lim Ru Huei 2E1*

Whenever I see the baby grand piano in the school hall, which we adopted, I am reminded of one particular event which took place this year, and which formed my most memorable experience in BPSS thus far. Our school put up a performance as part of the event entitled “Singapore Rhapsodies at National Gallery Singapore”.

The event took place in early April 2016. The school choir, along with student pianists and a Vanika, had been invited to perform at the National Gallery. At the event, the choir sang beautifully, and the student pianists, as well as the Vanika, played their instruments so melodiously. However, the most memorable experience, in my opinion, came after the performance.

After the recital, one of the teachers, Miss Adeline Tan, sat on the piano stool to give the Steinway & Sons red piano a try, upon which she began to play a song. Just seconds into the song, someone exclaimed “I know this song!” The truth was, we all did, as it was the song the entire school would sing every morning – our school song!

We were supposed to keep our volume down in the art gallery, but in that moment, we were simply bursting with pride, and wanted to sing our school song in unison. We started singing along to the tune of the piano, smiling as we did so. Even the teachers themselves were smiling while attempting to hush us in vain. However, it just did not feel right to stop in the middle of our school song, so we continued until we finished the chorus. This moment was made all the more so bittersweet in view of the impending merger of our school. Regardless, I quickly brushed my sad feelings aside and reveled in my sense of pride as a BPSian.

Every now and then, when I hear the resonating sounds of the piano in school being played, I am heartened to note that through the incorporation of music and the arts in our school lives, we have learnt to give back to the community.

# Passion and Pizzazz

Celestine Ng 2E2

There are so many reasons why I love my CCA, Art Club. The reason I chose to join the art club was because I enjoy all forms of art and I draw as a hobby. However, I have always wanted to improve my art work and build up my skills. Thus, I thought joining the school's art club would allow me to spend time doing something I love and at the same time improving at it. I soon came to realise that joining the art club was the best decision I made as not only did I have my teacher to critique my work, but occasionally we would also get an instructor who would teach us new techniques. This enabled us to learn and pick up a wide range of skills from different artists and professionals.

Another reason why I love the art club is because I get to spend more time with my friends. Since my closest friends are in the art club, there is always fun and laughter involved in each session. We are all constantly busy during curriculum time and are always running home for tuition. Thus CCA time is when we get to spend time together and joke around while doing something we all enjoy and love.

One other reason why I love my CCA is because it has taught me the importance of creativity along with a profound appreciation for art. Creativity is crucial in art as we need it in order to come up with different and eye-catching drawings, paintings and designs.

What I especially like about CCAs, is the Values-in-action component that allows us to reach out to the community at large and give back in some way. This project has taught me the importance of discipline, responsibility and empathy. The VIA project also allows us to have different learning experiences. I love that this project allowed me to incorporate what I love-art as well as my want to do something for the community. I would never have had this opportunity if not for my CCA and for that I am truly grateful!



# Passion and Pizzazz

John Matthew 2A1

I love my CCA, basketball, as it is my passion since I was a child. When I was 8 years old, I was introduced to the sport by my father. He would always take me to watch basketball games. He told me that basketball is our national sport and that every Filipino in the Philippines takes pride in the game. It is a common sight to see young boys and even older men playing basketball in their neighbourhoods.

Initially I was not too fascinated with the sport as it involved a lot of physical assertion. It required a significant amount of running which I did not really like as I was overweight and found it a chore to run. A year later, my father introduced me to basketball's phenomenon, Michael Jordan. He is one of the greatest basketball players of all time. My father showed me videos of his basketball highlights. I was fascinated especially with his dunking from the free-throw line. I was shocked as I did not think that it was humanly possible to jump that high! Jordan clearly puts in a lot of heart and passion in the game and I realised that I was inspired to take up the sport too.

My father started to train me and taught me the fundamentals like dribbling and shooting. When I turned 13, I started playing every day and my passion and fondness for the sport grew larger with each day.

I was heartened when I joined Bishan Park Secondary School and discovered that there was Basketball was offered as a CCA. I have made many friends in school because of this CCA and with the keen eye of my coaches and teachers; I have honed my skills in the sport. It is my fervent hope that one day I become good enough to join the National team or even the National Basketball Association!



# Passion and Pizzazz

Vong Ngoc Tram Anh Stacy 2E3

Choir was not my first choice of co-curricular activity. However, throughout the two years I have spent with the school's choir, I have realised that it is one of the best things to happen to me. Without my realising, it has become a part of my life and I now cannot imagine what it would have been like had I not joined this CCA.

Being in the Bishan Park Secondary School Choir has fuelled my love for music. The teachers introduced us to a wide range of song genres during our practices which have also exposed me to so many types of music I would never have listened to on my own.

One of the best things of being in this CCA is of course the friends I have made. With every high note I hit while singing with my buddies, I feel a soaring sense of passion and joy. Also, Choir is really the best form of relaxation after a long stressful day of lessons. My friends and I find that singing together helps us ease away all our tensions. It also helps that we are all motivated in the same way; driven by our common love for music and singing. This makes attending CCA every Monday and Wednesday an effortless affair. We come with the right attitude and sing from the bottom of our hearts. We put in our best and ultimately always strive to put on the best show possible.

Despite the fact that we do not have many members in the choir, we adopt the 'glass half-full' outlook and take advantage of our small numbers. It is easier to find a common voice. Also, because we have such intimate numbers, we've become very much like a family, feeling comfortable being ourselves and having no reservations communicating with each other. The teachers-in-charge treat us all equally regardless of whatever leadership position we hold. They are extremely kind. They encourage us and help us through whatever challenges we may face.

One of the events that truly made me love choir is how we came together to put up a performance for Teachers' Day. Initially, we were not chosen to be part of the celebration. However, after refining our initial proposal, we got selected to perform. What was memorable about this performance was all the effort that was put in leading up to it. We did not seek any help from our instructor or teachers. We taught ourselves the song and found common pockets of time to practise. In the end, it became apparent that we had worked cohesively as a team and we were proud when our teachers paid us compliments.

In the end, I want to give back to my CCA as much as I can as I have learnt so much being in Choir. I will reach and excel to become a responsible individual and bring my CCA and therefore my school to greater heights.

# Passion and Pizzazz

Enya Goh 1E1

It was a tough choice choosing a CCA that would be an activity suitable for me and also for it to be something I enjoy being involved in weekly. After much consideration, I decided to join Judo. Many have the misconception that Judo is a CCA which causes a lot of pain and is high-risk as one is easily prone to injury. While injury is a risk that is involved with any sport, I believe that Judo has given me more confidence and in fact taught me how to avoid injury.

When I first heard about Judo, I was afraid and had my reservations. However, after having heard from my seniors just how much they were enjoying being part of Judo, I felt that I wanted to be a part of it too. It was also one of the niche CCAs of the school and so I felt a certain sense of pride as I considered being a part of it. I realised that this was one of the harder decisions I had to make as I was choosing something that I was going to spend four years of my secondary school life in.

Training started and initially everything seemed very daunting. We were introduced to warm-ups which proved to be very challenging for me as I am a very petite girl. However, with some practice and perseverance, I have now mastered these warm-ups. After learning the warm-ups, we were told to start learning the different throwing techniques. We had to throw our partner based on our different weight ranges. Luckily for me, I found a girl as bony and tiny as me – Raeann. She was the perfect size for me!

Straight after the vigorous training we had the much dreaded physical training or PT. The PT was so tough that some of the ‘newbies’ started crying. We had to run around the school three times without allowing the seniors to catch up with us. We also had to fifty sit-ups, push-ups and squats. It was extremely tiring but it helped us test our strength and stamina and also teach us to be more disciplined. The physical training although tiring, was oddly what I enjoyed most. It helped me to improve on my core strength and allowed me to adopt a healthier body frame.

All in all, my CCA involves a lot physical exhaustion, however, there is never a dull day during training. The bond we judokas share is something that is irreplaceable and I could not be happier in my CCA Judo.



# Heart Work

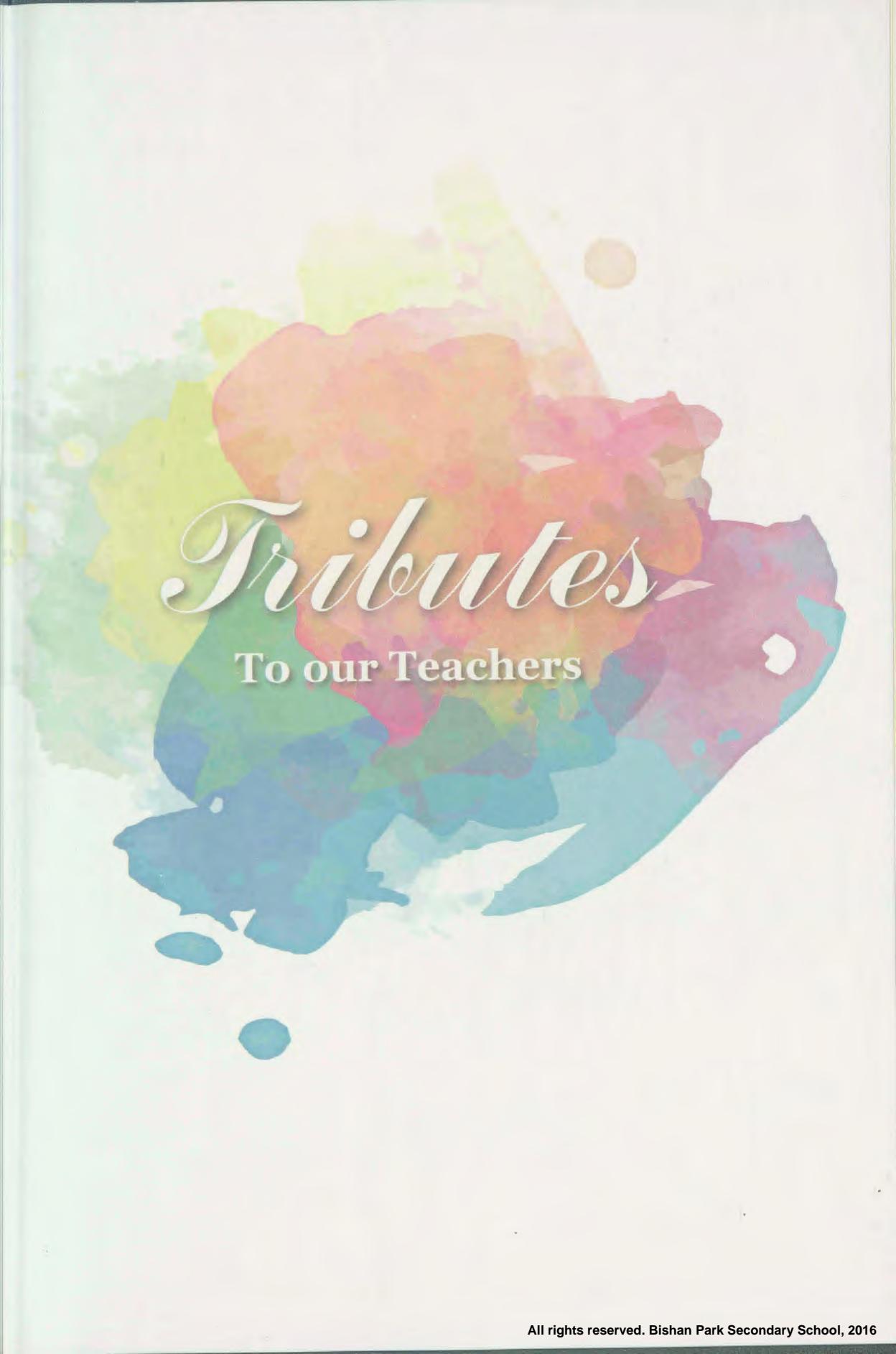
Chen Ruyu 2E1

On 12th August I went with my CCA friends to the Singapore Association for The Visually Handicapped to conduct our Values-in-Action (VIA) project. Our aim was to teach the elderly there how to plant terrariums so that they can develop some special skills and have something fun and relaxing to do during their free time.

When I was first told that we were going to teach them individually, I was nervous and a little afraid as I had never actually interacted with physically disabled people before. I still recall my hands getting sweaty as I guided my senior partner up the stairs. However, my partner seemed to sense my nerves and started to tell me jokes and stories. The uncle told me that he was not born with sight disability; instead, he used to be the captain of the football team in his school. Sadly, he lost his sight after secondary school. I was shocked that this unexpected accident did not knock him down. He still grew up to be such an optimistic and positive person.

During the process of making the terrarium, I was surprised again by the uncle's creativity and productivity and emerged as the first group to finish making our terrarium. Upon hearing the teachers' compliments and seeing the smile on the uncle's face, I was overcome with mixed feelings .I was happy that I had finally contributed albeit in a small way, to society but sad that I had come to this realization so late. I have started lending a helping hand much earlier in life.

After my unique VIA experience, I learnt never to be afraid of the unknown and to always also to try to help society as much as I can! I am thankful for this experience as I learnt giving back to the community need not be daunting.



# *Tributes*

To our Teachers

## My Inspirations

When my teachers come to class,  
they look fresh and cool through my glass.

With stacks of books in their hand,  
They take us through a faraway land.

Their words shine on us like the sun's ray,  
teaching us, to be truly great one day.

Through their lessons values they lace,  
allowing us to learn at our own pace

They mould us to move in our own way,  
but ensuring we grow day by day.

They never claim to be always right,  
but teach us they will the spirit to fight.

Teachers have a special place in my heart  
for I have learnt that teaching is the finest art.

*Teo Xinyi – 2E2*

## My Beacon

When you find me in a frown

You do all to make sure I'm not down.

You corrected me when I was wrong

But still made me feel like I was strong.

You praise me when I do something right

And successfully pull me out of any plight.

You give me inspiration

You are my motivation

Through the twisty creaks of canyons,

You are my light and perhaps my greatest companion...

*Caelyn Tan -2E2*

# My Rainbow

If roses are red and violets are blue  
And you were a flower, what would be your hue?  
I tell you it would be nothing mellow  
Perhaps something bright like yellow!

When I was alone and darkness was all I could see  
You came along and sat with me  
You taught me not just formulae and theory  
Your lessons went beyond history and facts clearly!

You told me to never miss the rainbow  
To always appreciate the beauty  
of nature, of people, and all that I see

You've taught me so many things in the classroom  
And so much more outside  
Now I want to tell you that because of you  
I appreciate even the colour white...

*Alden Ng -2E2*



## Believe in Me

I remembered that day.  
When I failed my test.  
I was down in the dumps.  
Disappointed. Sad. Down-trodden.

You surprised me with your reaction  
When you were neither angry nor shared frustration  
You said I'd tried my best  
And really it was just a test

You said you saw my effort  
And commended my work  
You saw in me something I didn't  
Something I never knew was apparent

Today I have faith  
Because you moulded me to be great!

*Celestine Ng -2E2*



# Artistic Musings



Title: **Flag Raising**  
Artist: Darius Lee Jia Hao 3A1



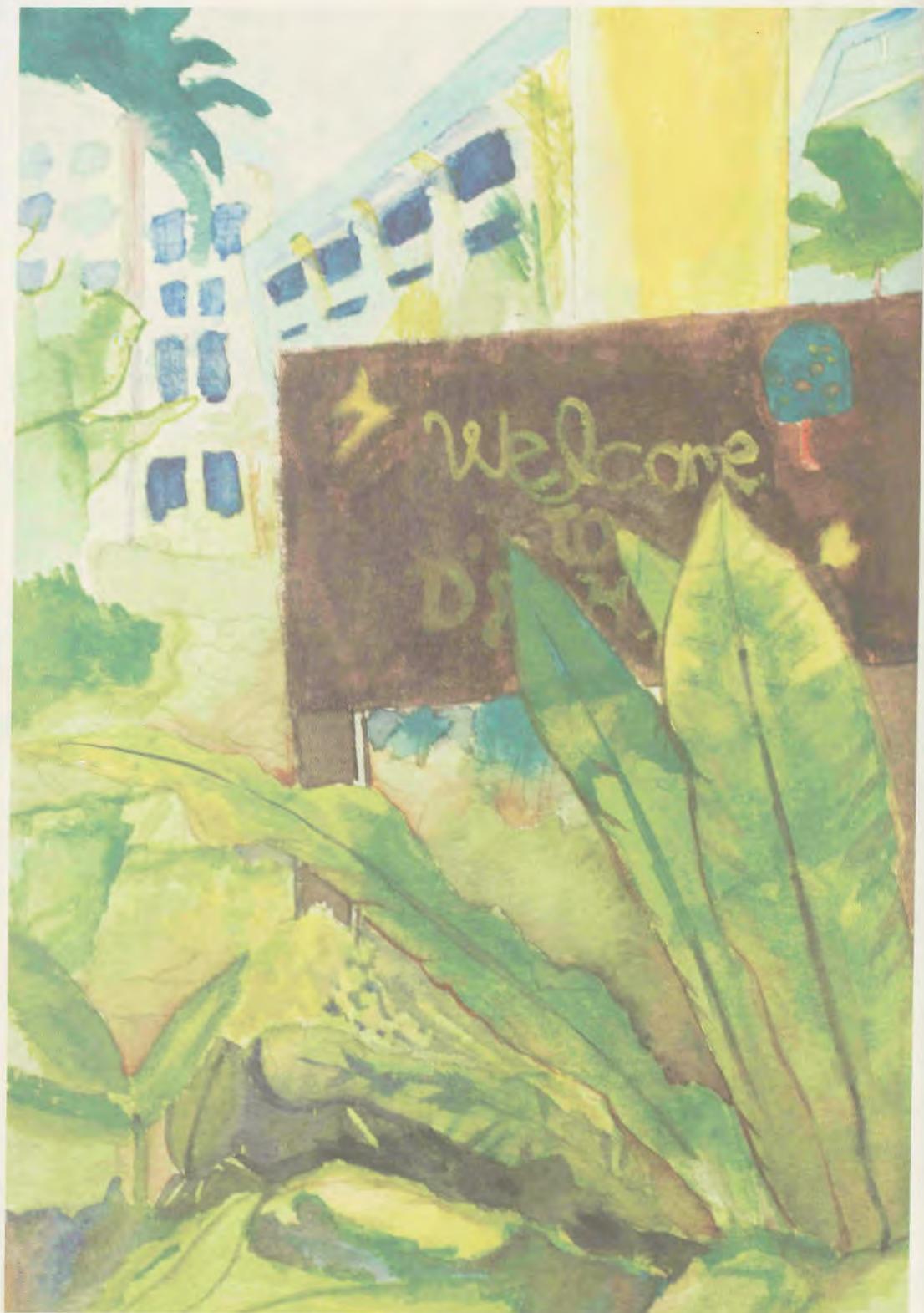
**Title: A View Of The School**

Artist: Erman Tan Yujun 3A1



**Title: The Stairs From The Canteen To The School Hall**

Artist: Lim Mohamed Eddie B Irwan 3T1



Title: **The Eco Garden**

Artist: Tan Wen Xin 3A1

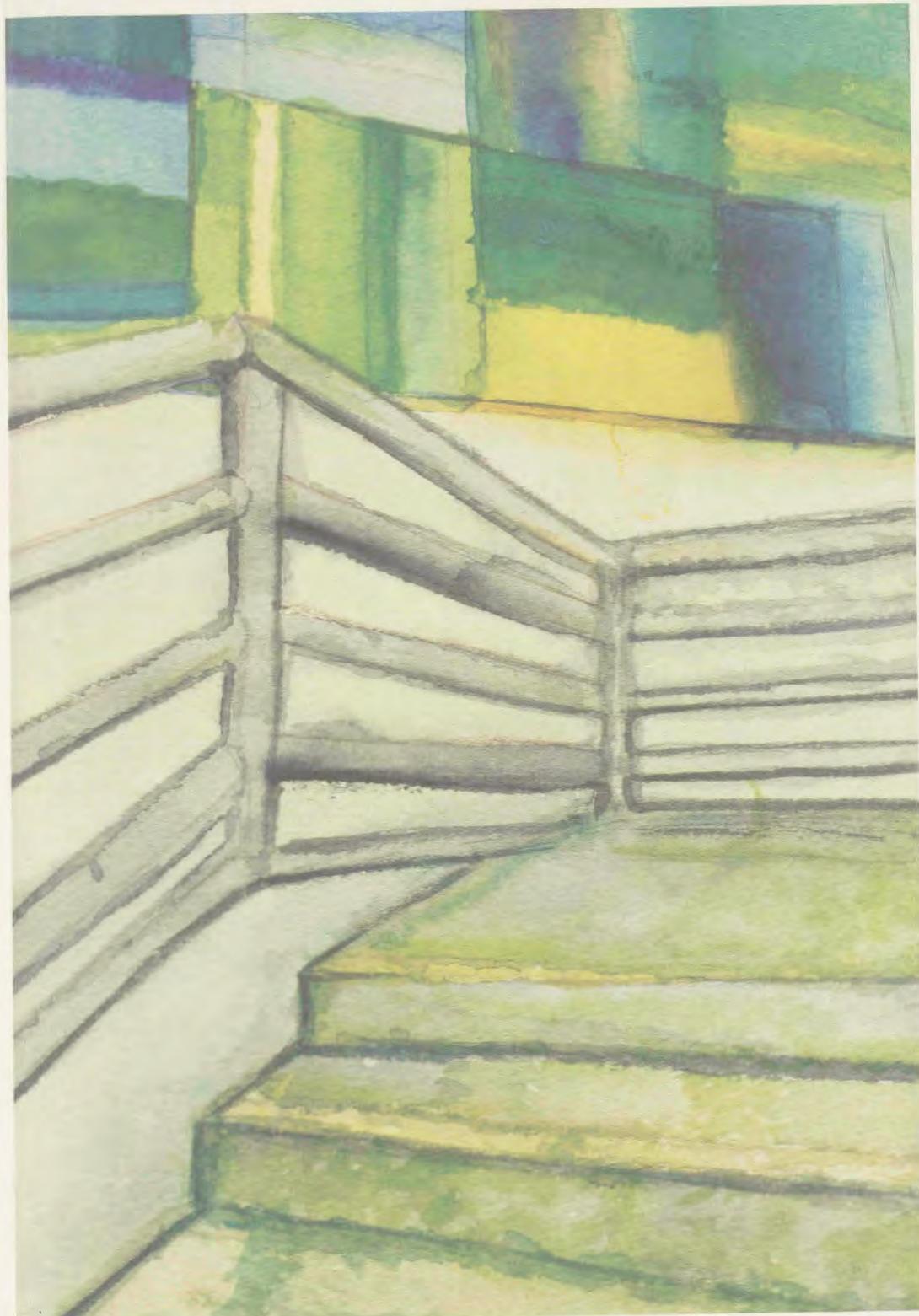


Title: **Lotus Collage**

Artists: Erman Tan Yujun, Huang Linlin,  
Lim WeiYun Nikki, Lam Yong Yan 3A1



Title: Window To Our Past: Glimpses Through Art  
Artist: Huang Linlin 3A1



**Title: The Central Staircase ft. The Wall Of Light**  
**Artist: Tan Hui Wen Tiffany 3A1**



**Title: Art Mural Against The Greenery**

Artist: Huang Linlin 3A1



**Title: The Corridor At The Art Room**  
**Artist: Lam Yong Yan 3A1**



**Title: The Bench On The Way To The Canteen**

Artist: Lim Wei Yun Nikki 3A1



Title: **Cosy Study Corner Facing The Park**  
Artist: Lim Wei Yun Nikki 3A1

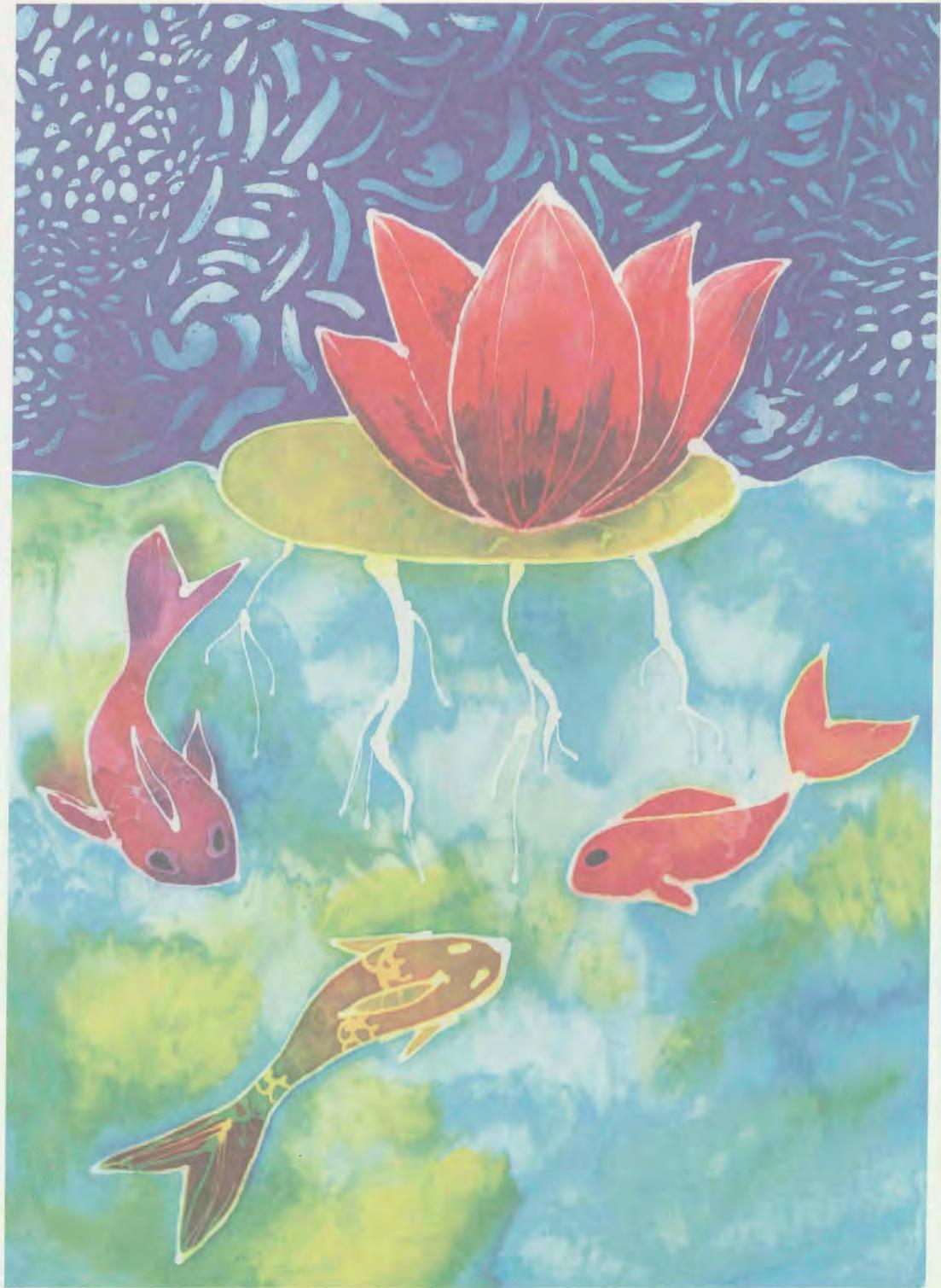


Title: **Batik Impressions**

Artist: Eunice Koo 2E2



Title: **Batik Impressions**  
Artist: Eunice Koo 2E2



Title: **Batik Impressions**  
Artist: Charmaine Chong 2E2



Title: **Batik Impressions**  
Artist: Nasrin Poon Bte Hashim 2A1



Title: **Abstract Colours**  
Artist: Loheswari D/o Letchimanan 3T1





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Bishan Park Secondary School

